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## CONSUMERS' PREFERENCES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS SAKTHI MASAALA PRODUCTS IN PUDUKOTTAI

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### *Abstract*

*Regarding the grocery powder there are many competitors in the markets to supply the various brands of masala powder at the desired quantity of the consumers. The following are the some of the branded masala powders which are hugely purchased by the women in their preparation for food items. Achi masala, Sakthi masala, A1 Masala etc and some of the brands prepared in the local areas. Amongst all masala powders Sakthi Masala and Achi masala are the major competitors in the markets. Due to the heavy advertisement processes taken by these companies the consumers are highly attracted by these two powders in kitchens of all family. These two companies influence the buying decisions of the consumers when compared with other brands of masala particularly the Sakthi masala's have more influence over the buying decision of the consumers. There are many local companies and cottage industries in the market for supplying the groceries powders but the sales of sakthi masala leads other brands of powders in many occasions. The consumers in all areas prefer to buy only the sakthimasala. They hesitate to buy another brand. They sometime return back to their home without buying the curri masala if there is no availability of Sakthi masala. So in this study focuses to consumers' preferences and attitudes towards sakthimasaala products in Pudukottai.*

**Keywords:** *Consumer preference, Consumer attitude, Consumer behaviour.*

### **Introduction**

In olden days people used to prepare the food items for the family members by using the components which are available in the local area and required for cooking various food items. Traditional methods of preparation were utilized by all the women and also by male members who

prepared food items. More volume of manual labor was utilized for preparing all food items. The female members eagerly involved in cooking and serving the food items to the family members. Most of the female members were engaged in home affairs only. They had enough time to prepare the food items. Further due to lack

of development in technology and lack of awareness most of the time was spent by the female members in the kitchen room. But at present the situation is entirely changed. As we have experienced tremendous development in the technology and science, in household activities electrical and electronic equipments like mixer grinder, juicer, grinder, electric stove etc are being used even in the house of BPL (Below Poverty Line) family. Further all the members of the family including the female members particularly mothers are in a position to go for earning to the family by engaging any of the activities which generate income. They could not spend more time in preparing food items. They are hurry and busy in various engagements in their day to day activities. So the male members support the female members in cooking to minimize the time for preparation of food items.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

There are number of suppliers in the market to supply the masala powders in desired quantity for a reasonable price. All the manufacturers of masala powder try to satisfy the needs of the consumers by supplying various types of masalas which are frequently used in preparing foodstuff items. But the Sakthi masala has gained good reputation from the society. Nowadays it is being considered as the fast moving consumer goods. Other brands of masala powders are not moving fast as like Sakthi Masala powder. However by making effective advertisement in the media powder like Achi and Pioneer and some of the local brands capture considerable market for their products. Some of the manufacturers suffer lot to operate their business successfully. They could not compete in the market due to various factors in the quality, price and also some other factors. Sometime they face loss in their business. There are some of the family members involving in selling of various masala powders at a desired quantity. As the Sakthi Masala is familiar

in the market, the cottage industries which involved in the manufacture of masala powders are in a position to close their business. Many families in the study area are doing the business of selling various masala powders. They prepare the products by using manual labours with the help of local rice mills. Their survival is questionable as the Sakthi Masala captures the entire market. Further in some of the area in Pudukottaidistrict the sales volume of the Sakthi masala products are fluctuating frequently. Some it affects the target of the Sakthi masala company which will affect the return of the company.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the main objectives of the study

1. To evaluate the existing varieties of masala powders in the Pudukottai town
2. To know the factors affecting the buying decision of the consumers with regard to the Sakthi Masala products.
3. To analyze the market potentiality for the Sakthi Masala Products.
4. To identify the opinion of the consumers regarding the utility of Sakthi masala Products
5. To find out the problems faced by the consumers when they use the Sakthi Masala products
6. To find out the remedial measures and offer recommendations to the needy.

#### **Research Methodology**

##### **Research Design**

Descriptive research was conducted in this study to make the research effective and useful to the needy.

##### **Collection of Data**

Both the primary and secondary data was collected in this research work

##### **Primary Data**

Primary data was collected from the sample respondents from the population by way preparing a questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared with the guidance of the experts in the relevant field. A necessary correction was made in the questionnaire

to complete the research work successfully.

### Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from the journals and magazine published in the related topics.

### Sample Selection

The consumers who are using Sakthi masala products for preparing the food stuff items are the population for the study. As the population is numerous in the study area 120 respondents were selected in the Pudukottai town from the total population. The respondents were selected at random by using convenient sampling method. As the Sakthi masala products are used in hotels out of 120 respondents 20 respondents were selected from the hotel industry in Pudukootai, remaining 100 respondents were selected from the residents of Pudukottai. The sample respondents consist of both male and female respondents in the ratio of 1: 5 respectively

### Study Area

Pudukkottai is one of the districts which are familiar for both the industrial development and also for educational development. The people in the district use both Sakthi masala products and also other local branded products manufactured within the district. As the researcher hailed from Pudukottai area, the researcher selected Pudukottai for his project work.

### Statistical Tools

The collected data will be analyzed and interpreted properly to find the result of the research work. Further to know the association between two variables in deciding the particular issues statistical tools like simple percentage, chi-square, rank correlation, and ANOVA test will also be used.

### HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesizes were framed for completing the project work effectively.

1. There is no association between the respondents based on the age and the

volume of use of Sakthi Masala products.

2. There is no association between the educational qualification of the respondents and the knowledge about various brands of masala powders available in the market.
3. There is no association between the respondents based on the age and their opinion about the price of Sakthi Masala Products.
4. There is no association between the respondents based on their occupation and the volume of Sakthi masala products used.

### Limitation of the Study

1. The data was collected from the consumers of Sakthi Masala products. So the findings of the study may not be considered for other products

### Significance of the Study

The cottage industry which involved in preparing various masala powders in the Pudukottaitown face huge problems in selling their products. They could not get the income to meet the basic requirements. But most of them depend on selling various curry powders in the residential area of Pudukkottai district. They must find some alternative for their survival or they must otherwise try to know the attitudes of the customer before taking a decision to buy the masala powders. Hence first of all it is necessary to know the factors affecting the buying decision of the customers which will help them to satisfy the needs of the customers by supplying the products in the desired tastes of the consumers. In another aspect even though the Sakthi masala powders are purchased largely by the people, due to competition by Achi masala, Devi masala and some other powder in some of the areas of Pudukottaidistrict, the sales turnover of the Sakthi masala powders is fluctuating frequently. So the Sakthi Masala Company is in a position to know the causes for the fluctuation of sales in the Sakthi Masala products.

Table No. 1

## Socio Economic Status

<i>Profile</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Percentage</i>	
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	20		16.67	
Female	100		83.33	
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>		<b>100</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Below 25 years	20	04	24	20.00
26 to 35	26	05	31	25.83
36 to 45	34	06	40	33.33
46 and above	20	05	25	20.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Unmarried	16	02	18	15.00
Married	74	17	91	75.83
Widow	04	-	04	03.33
Divorce	06	01	07	05.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational status</b>				
Up to 10 <sup>th</sup> Std	16	02	18	15.00
Up to 12 <sup>th</sup> Std	54	09	63	52.50
UG	06	03	09	07.50
PG	04	02	06	05.00
Others diploma	20	04	24	20.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>				
House wife	37	-	37	30.83
Employed in private sector	24	09	33	27.50
Government employee	06	03	09	07.50
Labour	24	05	29	24.17
Business	09	03	12	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table it is clearly understood that among 120 respondents 16.67 % of the respondents are male, while the remaining 83.33 % of the respondents are female.

From the above table it is inferred that 20% of the respondents belong to the age group of below 25 years and 25.83% of the respondents belong to the age group 26 to 35 years, 33.33% of the respondents belong to the age group of 36 to 45 years where as 20.84% of the respondents belong to the age group of 46 years and above.

From the above table it is clearly

understood that among 120 respondents 15% of the respondents are unmarried, 75.83% of the respondents are married, and 3.33% of the respondents have lost their spouse while the remaining 5.84% of the respondents are divorce.

The above table clearly reveals that among 120 respondents 52.5% of the respondents have studied up to 12<sup>th</sup>std, 15% of the respondents studied up to 10<sup>th</sup>Std, 20% of the respondents have studied diploma courses, 7.5% of the respondents completed degree, while the remaining 5% of the respondent have completed post graduate degrees.

The above table shows that among 120 respondents 30.83% of the respondents are house wives, 27.5% of the respondents are employed in private

sectors, 24.17% of the respondents are labour, 10% of the respondents involved in business, while the remaining 7.50% of the respondents are government employees.

**Table No. 2**  
**Showing the Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Monthly Income	Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Female	Male		
Up to Rs.4000	37(35)	05(7)	42	35.00
Rs.4001-8000	29(31.67)	09(6.33)	38	31.67
Rs.8001-12000	26(24.17)	03(4.83)	29	24.16
Rs.12000 and above	08(9.16)	03(1.84)	11	09.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

The figure in the parenthesis shows the expected frequencies. The table limelight that among 120 respondents 35% of the respondents get a monthly income up to Rs.4000, 31.67% of the respondents earn Rs. 4001-8000 per month, 24.16 % of the respondents get a monthly income between Rs.8001-12000 while the remaining 9.17% of the respondents earn Rs.12000 and above per month.

As the calculated value of  $\chi^2$  (3.741) is less than the table of  $\chi^2$ (7.815) at 3 degrees of freedom for 5 % level of significance, there is no relationship between the respondents based on sex and their income per month. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no relationship between the sex of the respondents and their income. Income of the respondents may depend on some other factor like the activities involved, ability of the individual and the experience.

Chi Square Test			
D.o.F	Sig.	T.Value	C.Value
3	5%	7.815	3.741

**Table No. 3**  
**Showing the Association between Age of the Respondents and their Occupation**

Age	Respondents based on occupation					respondents	%
	House wife	Employed in private sector	Government employee	Labour	Business		
Below 25 years	09(7.40)	05(6.60)	02(1.80)	06(5.8)	02(2.4)	24	20.00
26-35	06(9.56)	08(8.53)	03(2.33)	07(7.5)	07(3.1)	31	25.83
36-45	12(12.33)	13(11)	03 (3)	11(9.66)	01(4)	40	33.33
46 and above	10(7.71)	07(6.87)	01(1.87)	05(6.04)	02(2.5)	25	20.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between respondents based on the age and their occupation.

**Alternative hypothesis**

There is significant relationship between respondents based on the age and their occupation.

Chi Square Test			
Degree s of freedo m	Level of significanc e	Table Value	Calculate d value
12	5%	21.026	11.482

As the calculated value of  $\chi^2$ (



11.482) is less than the table of  $\chi^2$  (21.026) at 12 degrees of freedom for 5 % level of significance, there is no relationship between the respondents based on the age and their occupation. . Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that

there is no significant relationship between the respondents based on age and their occupation. The occupation of the respondents may depend on some other factor like knowledge, education and the attitudes of the respondents.

**Anova Table**  
**Table No. 4**

**Educational Qualification and Opinion of the Respondents**

Sources of Variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum Square	MSS =SS/Dof	Fc	F <sub>tab(5%)</sub>
Between samples	4	438	438/4=109.5	109.5/51.05=2.144	3.01
Within samples	4	421.2	421.2/4= 105.3	105.3/51.05=2.06	3.01
Error	16	816.8	816.8/16=51.05		
Total	24	1676			

Critical Value. The critical value of F for 4 and 16 degrees of freedom at  $\alpha = 0.05$  is  $F_{0.05(4,16)}$  is = 3.01

Decision: The computed value 2.144 < tabled value of  $F_{0.05(4,16)}$  (4,16) = 3.01. Hence the null hypothesis  $H_0$  is accepted and the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  is rejected. All the mean of the respondents based on educational qualification are equal and all the mean opinion of the respondents regarding the location of the Sakthi masala products store are similar.

**Findings**

The collected data were properly interpreted and analyzed by applying various statistical tools to make the study fruitful and find out the result of the study and make the findings useful to the needy. After having thorough analyses from the collected data, the following finds were found out.

1. Most of the respondents are female.(83.33 %)
2. Most of the respondents belong to the age group of 36 to 45 years
3. Most of the respondents are married (75.83%)
4. Major proportion of the respondents have studied up to 12<sup>th</sup>std(52.5%)
5. Most of the respondents are house wife.
6. Most of the respondents get a monthly income up to Rs.4000

7. Most of the respondents told that tasty is the main reason for purchasing the sakthi masala products (44.17%)
8. Most of the respondents conveyed that their parents influenced them to buy sakthi masala products.
9. Most of the respondents told that they buy only the traditional spice blend,(40%)
10. Most (70%) of the respondents opined that the brand image of the products play role in buying the products.
11. Major proportion (53.33%) of the respondents opined that the brand image of the products attracted the respondents hence they bought the products.
12. Most (57.5%) of the respondents told that they know the other services provided by the sakthi masala company.
13. Most of the respondents told that the companysponsors the divider in the road side.
14. Most (77.50) of the respondents told that the company takes initiatives to promote the sales.
15. Most (36.56%) of the respondents informed that the company maintain sustainable quality in the products to promote the sales.

**Suggestions**

Some of the respondents opined that the rate of the sakthimasaala products is increased frequently. Hence the

management should try to maintain stability in the price of the products which will help to increase the potential customers. Few respondents in the study area are not satisfied with the sakthimasaala products. Hence the company should enhance the quality and taste of the products to satisfy all the consumers. Few consumers in the study area do not know much about the sakthimasaala products due to lack of awareness and limited literacy, so the company may give more advertisement so that the sakthimasaala products will reach all the parts of the country.

### **Conclusion**

The Sakthi masala products are one of the familiar brands in the markets, even though in the study area some of the people do not aware of sakthi masala products, as they used to buy the local

brands of masala powders prepared at cottage level. Further they buy masala items in the groceries shop and they prepare masala powders for their own taste. It is the real situation prevailing in the study area. Most of the respondents in the study area prepare pickles in their home itself. The masala powder is prepared by them once or twice in a year. Further there are severe competitions in the market for Sakthi masala products nowadays. Hence the company has to concentrate more in marketing and advertisement of their products in all possible way to overcome the issues in marketing of Sakthi masala products which will help to satisfy the needs and desires of the ultimate consumers and lead to increase the profit of the concerns. The company has to enhance the quality of all varieties of Sakthi masala products to have stability movements of all of its products in the market.